

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (previously presented): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing (1) and a flexible internal structure, the internal structure being made of flexible strips (8, 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d), overlaid and separated by supports (9, 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d), the supports located on either side of the strips being staggered, wherein the strips are spring plates having an elastic limit, and the supports comprise blocks which are laid out in rows, the rows extending in a first direction which is perpendicular to the strips, the blocks occupying every other space between the strips along the rows and being present at every second row in a second direction which is parallel to the strips, the sealing joint being compressible until the spring plates come to mutual contact between pairs of the supports below the elastic limit.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that some of the supports, which belong to a pair of layers nearest to the casing, extend under projections (6) positioned on an external surface of the casing.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 2, characterised in that the supports and the projections are linear.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are distinct, with a closed outline.

Claim 5 (canceled)

Claim 6 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1 further comprising at least one ring connecting together a plurality of said blocks.

Claim 7 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are made in metal, ceramic or alloy with oxide dispersion.

Claim 8 (canceled)

Claim 9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (canceled)

Claim 11 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 1, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 14 (canceled)

Claim 15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (canceled)

Claim 17 (canceled)

Claim 18 (canceled)

Claim 19 (previously presented): A sealing joint comprising an external metal casing (1) and a flexible internal structure, the internal structure being made of flexible strips (8a, 8b, 8c, 8d) overlaid and separated by supports (9, 9a, 9b, 9c, 9d), the supports located on either side of the strips being staggered, wherein the strips are spring plates having an elastic limit, and the supports comprise blocks which are laid out in rows, the blocks each contacting two of the plates, the rows extending in a first direction which is perpendicular to the strips, the blocks occupying every other space between the strips along the rows and being present at every second row in a second direction which is parallel to the strips, the sealing joint being compressible until the

spring plates come to mutual contact between pairs to the supports below the elastic limit.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that some of the supports, which belong to a pair of layers nearest to the casing, extend under projections (6) positioned on an external surface of the casing.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 20, characterised in that the supports and the projections are linear.

Claim 22 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are distinct, with a closed outline.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, further comprising at least one ring connecting together a plurality of said blocks.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are made in metal, ceramic or alloy with oxide dispersion.

Claim 25 (canceled)

Claim 26 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the flexible strips are circular and flat.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the supports radiate.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the supports are concentric rings with differing radii.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The sealing joint set forth in claim 19, characterised in that the internal structure is an assembly of at least two flexible strips.

Claim 30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (canceled)

Claim 33 (canceled)

Claim 34 (canceled)

Claim 35 (canceled)